

CROSBYANA

Christmas Number 1951





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CHRISTMAS 1951

Edited by REG. DAVIS

J.C.

101 Ridgway, Wimbledon, London, S.W.19

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The club was established in March 1950 by permission of
Mr. Bing Crosby and is associated with the American Club Crosby.

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE HONORARY PRESIDENT

The following cablegram has been received by the editors.

BEST WISHES TO BRITISH BING CLUB FOR MUCH
SUCCESS IN 52 - BING CROSBY

* * * * *

MANY THANKS BING FOR THINKING OF US. ON BEHALF OF THE
BRITISH BING CLUB MAY WE WISH YOU AND YOUR FAMILY ALL BEST
WISHES FOR THE COMING YEAR. MAY YOUR STAR NEVER SHINE SO BRIGHT.

* * * * *

ON BEHALF OF JEAN, ARTHUR, LES, DOT, COLIN & AVRIL WE
WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL MEMBERS FOR THEIR SUPPORT DURING THE
PAST YEAR AND WISH THEM A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A BRIGHT
AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR.

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ain't doin' bad doing nuthin

Horror of horrors, Christmas is already upon us with it's attendant confusion and chaos: it finds two harassed editors knee deep in paper and dripping with duplicating ink, fighting against the clock and generally working like company directors who have just been threatened with nationalisation. However we have succeeded in producing some results, and now it is up to the G.P.O. to ensure that once again you will be able to while away a pleasant five minutes over this issue before returning it to the salvage heap from whence it came. If only one word could be used to describe this issue of Crosbyana it would I feel have to be Miscellany. For typed by many different hands and on three separate machines, it contains a varied selection of articles, and one at least that I hope will please everybody.

There is little news to relate. A select gathering of members collected at Wimbledon on Sunday 18th. November for an evening's listening to the Maestro. A number of rare and unusual records were played and our thanks are extended to Roy Ingram who very kindly lugged his wire recorder all the way over from Kensal Rise in the pouring rain for our benefit. Mention must also be made of a notable achievement by Cab Smith who travelled a great distance in order to be present and then had to spend the night on Paddington station having missed his last train home. I was disappointed that so many members were unable to attend on this occasion, however it is hoped to hold another such evening some time in January, and I would be obliged if any members who live in and around London and who would like to attend would get in touch with me in the near future.

It appears that there has been a certain amount of misunderstanding on the part of some members, and I have received several letters asking me what the h--- had happened to the September/October issue of the journal. I am sorry that they have been labouring under the misapprehension, which was doubtless caused by the issuing of the journal at bi-monthly intervals, that they would receive six issues per annum, although in fact it was originally intended only to issue five. When I took over the editorship I had hoped to increase this number to six, but this I have so far found impossible to accomplish. However you are getting a double ration in this issue, so I don't really think you can complain on that score.

Anyhow I should like to take this yuletide opportunity to thank all those of you who have taken the trouble to write to me during the past year: your letters have not always been complimentary, but they do at least show that you are taking an interest in the club, and that makes me feel that all my hard labour is worth while.

I should also like to thank my good friends Elizabeth Bale, Geoff

(Continued on Page 14)

CROSBY TALK

by Jean

"Famous" is now well under way at Paramount, and a few more details have been received about Bing's latest. For instance the film will be photographed in Technicolor. This will please many of us since out of the dozens of films Bing has made only four have been in colour.

The cast of "Famous" now includes Jane Wyman, Ethel Barrymore, Natalie Wood and Robert Arthur. The latter two will play Bing's teen-age children. Nat Wood has been seen in many pictures and Bob Arthur's last film was "Ace in the Hole".

The story of "Famous" is that of a successful composer and producer of Broadway shows (Bing) who has been a widower for several years. Wrapped up in his career he suddenly realizes that he hasn't been devoting as much attention to his children as he should, and is afraid of losing their love. Miss Wyman as a Broadway song and dance star and Ethel Barrymore as head mistress of an exclusive girls' school help him work out his problem.

Eleven songs have been completed for the film by Harry Warren and Leo Robin. This is more than average for a Bing picture -- Bing will sing eight, Jane two and they will also be heard in a duet.

It looks as though "Famous" will be a picture to suit all tastes for it not only appears that Bing will get another "acting" part, but he is also going to sing a good deal more than he has done for some time in a film. Warren and Robin have written many good songs for Bing in the past so it shouldn't be too much to hope that out of the eleven songs at least half may become hits.

Shortly after the New Year we'll be having some more good news for Bing, Bob and Dot will be on their travels again, this time on the long awaited "Road to Bali".

Bing has recently sold his house at Pebble Beach, near San Francisco, which he had built only a couple of years ago. It seems that the Crosbys prefer to spend their spare time at the ranch in Elko, and don't have much chance to use their Pebble Beach home.

It was reported that Bing had bought a T.V. set with a 30 inch screen. When Dixie saw it she exclaimed; --It's so big I could sit outside in that tree and I'd still see it. The next day when she came in she found that upon Bing's instructions a chair had been put up in the tree outside the house, the tree being labelled 'Dixie Crosby'.

In St. Petersburg, Florida, a couple showed up in time for their wedding but were kept waiting 45 minutes at the altar by the Rev. J.W. Pearson who was out seeing "Here Comes the Groom".

MEMBERS' ADVERTISEMENTS

Quantity of swing discs, Sid Phillips, Woody Herman, Glenn Miller and Tex Beneke, will exchange for any Crosby vocals. I am also interested in buying any early Crosby, deleted or catalogued.

Bert Morton,
25 Barnett Road,
Portobello,
Willenhall,
Staffs.

TOO YOUNG to die!

★ Bing
★ Bob
★ Frankie

Reprinted from "Modern Screen."

Time: Winter of 1949.

Place: North Hollywood: the living room of Bob Hope's rambling Tudor residence. As the curtain rises, Bob is sitting on a sofa with Linda, nine, his oldest daughter. He is in his favorite position, counting money. There's a knock at the door. As Linda rises to answer it, Bob, unmindful of the disturbance, keeps arranging hundred dollar bills into nice, neat piles. Linda opens the door, and Frank Sinatra enters.

Linda: (Extending her hand) Hi!

Sinatra: Hi, Linda! (He picks the child up and kisses her cheek, then puts her down.) Your old man around?

Linda: He sure is. He got a rush call from the White House this morning.

Sinatra: You mean...?

Linda: Exactly. The Treasury is short on cash.

Sinatra: Do you think he can spare me a few minutes?

Linda: I think so-if you don't want to borrow any money....Do you?

Sinatra: Not today. You see, Linda, I want to talk to your daddy about Bing Crosby.

Linda: Well, that's not exactly Daddy's favorite subject you know.

Sinatra: Yeah, but I'm sort of involved, too.

Linda: Then, why don't you just go in? I'm on my way out to play.
(She steps out the door) So long!

Sinatra: So long, Linda. (Frank approaches Hope, whose face is barely visible behind three piles of greenbacks.)

Hope: (Without looking up.) Sounds like Sinatra.

Sinatra: It sure ain't Jane Russell. (Hope rises, and they shake hands warmly.)

Hope: Glad you could drop in, Frank. Things must be slow for you.

Sinatra: Oh, not too slow. I'm up to my ears in radio work.

Hope: Still in radio, eh?

Sinatra: You sound surprised.

Hope: Frankly, thin-boy, I am.

Sinatra: On the level?

Hope: Sure. After all, Frank, you've been around 10 years. That's a long time.

Sinatra: And you, I guess, are what they call a newcomer?

Hope: Don't feel hurt. After all, I'm just quoting.

Sinatra: Quoting who, Crosby?

Hope: No! Crosby and you are in the same boat.

Sinatra: What do you mean, same boat?

Hope: Do you-do you read the magazines?

Sinatra: Sure, I read.

Hope: I knew you could, no matter what they say!... Well, haven't you read that stuff about you and Crosby being washed up?

Sinatra: Who wrote it, you?

Hope: Perish the thought! But only the other day, I picked up an August copy of Cosmopolitan magazine and there was an article that said, "Crosby and Sinatra are finished".

Sinatra: Hah! How much did you pay to have it published?

Hope: No, honestly, it came as a big shock to me.

Sinatra: I can imagine.

Hope: It so happens that by a strange coincidence I have a copy of the article with me.

Sinatra: Strange coincidence, my neck.

Hope: (reaches into a back pocket and comes up with the clipping): I really don't want to read it to you, but if you insist.

Sinatra: Okay, go ahead, Read it.

Hope: An, I just haven't got the heart! After all, you're so thin and weak.

Sinatra: Don't let that worry you, Jumbo. I can take it.

Hope: "Jumbo"?... Okay, it says: "More that two years have passed since it first became apparent that Bing Crosby was beginning to slip..." But I can't go on, Frank.

Sinatra: Never mind, keep going.

Hope: "Bing... the jaunty little man... simply does not have it any more."

Sinatra: Keep reading.

Hope: "There is no one around at the moment who seems capable of taking his distinguished place. Sinatra, for example, has been sounding progressively more inept with each new recording,"

Sinatra: That's enough.

Hope: (continuing): "He is slipping too."

Sinatra: Enough, Bob.

Hope: "The color has gone from his voice".

Sinatra: (jerking the clipping away from Bob and tossing it out the window): Enough is enough. (Both men look at each other and then start roaring with laughter which gradually subsides).

Sinatra: You'd think Bing and I were public enemies, the way they write about us.

Hope: It's nothing Frank. You've got to take it in stride. They've been trying to kill Bing off in print for the past five years,

Sinatra: I wonder why.

Hope: For the same reason they've been picking on you. You guys make good copy.

Sinatra: Maybe we do. But I'm in my early thirties and Bing is in his forties, and we're too young to die. Why don't they hop on someone older?

Bob: Like, say, Al Jolson?

Sinatra: What, and put Larry Parks out of a job?

Hope: Don't worry about Larry. He'll be Okay. He's got talent.

Sinatra: You mean Betty Garrett?

Hope: I mean more than that Larry's not just a crooner like some guy who happened to be born in Hoboken.

Sinatra: I never realized you were a jealous man.

Hope: Not jealous, kid-just honest.

Sinatra: Well, speaking of honesty-tell me on the level, what do you think of Bing's voice these days?

Hope: Are you really interested in Crosby's voice?

Sinatra: Bob, I give you my word. If anything should happen to Bing's voice, and if people should then go around saying Sinatra had inherited his mantle, I'd...I'd...

Hope: Just be heartbroken, wouldn't you?

Sinatra: That word doesn't do me justice.

Hope: You can say that again. But just to put your mind at ease, scarecrow, let me tell you that Bing is now singing as well as he ever has in his whole life.

Sinatra: Then, why do these wise guys say he's lost some of his witchery?

Hope: They have reference to his hair.

Sinatra: Maybe so, but it's his voice he sings with.

Hope: Right. And a man's vocal chords last a long time. Jolson is one example. Ezio Pinza is a second. Crosby is a third. Bing's voice is still good for years and years. Now, what's happened, I think, is that people have gotten accustomed to it. That frog in his throat doesn't surprise them any more. The voice doesn't have the quality of newness it once had, but it's still there. If anything it's developed. It's got more range and power.... I know you're tickled pink to hear all this.

Sinatra: I sure am, because all those things you said also happen to be true of my pipes.

Hope: You don't say.

Sinatra: I do say,

Hope: This is no time for modesty. Tell me everything.

Sinatra: Well, Bob, I think it's only human nature to point out small failings and neglect accomplishments.

Hope: Your wisdom amazes me.

Sinatra: Let me miss one benefit dinner, just one, and the next thing you know, people are going around saying I'm as bad as Crosby.

Let me make one bad record, and overnight, I sound like Bing.

Same with pictures. One bad one, and they say I've pulled a Crosby.

Hope: You imply that Bing's name is synonymous with failure?

Sinatra: Your Vocabulary amazes me.

Hope: Well, get yourself de-amazed, thin-frame, and let me tell you a thing or two. One or two whacky critics can write Bing off in print, but (putting one hand on his chest and pointing dramatically upward with his other) they can't write him out of the hearts of the public.

Sinatra: Now I'm crying... By "public" no doubt you mean Dixie and the four boys.

Hope: I mean that one or two magazine writers can say anything they want to about Bing, but just so long as the people like him, that's all that counts.

Sinatra: Hmmm... Speaking of what counts, what've you been doing these past few weeks, besides counting your money?

Hope: Counting money? Listen, son, I've been keeping the airlines in business this past year. In addition to radio and pictures, I've been playing dates all over the country.

Sinatra: A little rough for a man of your years isn't it?

Hope: Ridiculous! Why, I chinned myself this morning. Almost.

Sinatra: Let's face it. There's probably some truth to the rumor.

Hope: What rumor?

Sinatra: That you plan to retire in a few years.

Hope: Who started that, you?

Sinatra: You're mistaking me for Crosby. I believe in live and let live.

Hope: Yeah? For how long?

Sinatra: Well, at least until your kids get big enough to support you.

Hope: The trouble with you and Bing is that you're scared silly. Ever since I sang "Buttons and bows" in Paleface, you two guys are afraid you'll have some serious singing competition. And wait'll you hear me in my duet with Rhonda Fleming in The Great Lover.

Sinatra: Matter of fact, I intend to sing more and more in my pictures. That's a hint, Frankie-boy.

Sinatra: Meaning what?

Hope: Meaning that maybe you'd better retire while the retiring is good.

Sinatra: Me retire? I'm too young. My whole life lies before me.

Hope: Well, I guess you could struggle along in pictures for a few more years.

Sinatra: It's no struggle. You see, Bob, I'm not like you. I have youth and energy and spirit on my side. Wait until you see On The Town.

Hope: You mean Gene Kelly's picture?

Sinatra: I'm in it too.

Hope: A bit, no doubt.

Sinatra: I'm the co-star.

Hope: They must be desperate at Metro these days. . . . Look, thin-man, what brings you to the Casa Hope, anyway? You want a job or something?

Sinatra: No, Bob, I don't want a job - but I do want some advice. You've been around in the entertainment business a long time and you know most of the angles. If you were Bing or me, what would you do about these articles that keep asking: Is Crosby finished? and Is Sinatra finished? You know, this attempt to kill us off in print?

Hope (putting on a long white beard): Son, you and Bing can do one of two things - ignore the stuff altogether, because it's obviously not true and only written to entice the readers; or you can sit down and write an answer to those guys who insist you're finished. "Listen, fellas," you can say, "no one knows better than a singer when his voice is beginning to go. It's the kind of thing you, yourself, feel first, like a headache. You don't need anyone to tell you about it. When it does go," you can say, "I'm retiring. No one has to give me the gong or reel me in with a hook and line. I'm not the kind of guy who deludes himself. When my time is up, I'll accept it graciously. But that time hasn't come yet." That's what you and Bing can say, my boy.

Sinatra: Gee, that sounds great. Why don't we do an article like that together?

Hope (removing beard): Together? I've got a brain, but what can you contribute?

Sinatra: I've got a terrific title, "Too young to die."

Hope: "Too young to die," eh? That's not half bad. (Aside) Confound the whippersnapper! Why didn't I think of it?

Sinatra: O.K. Let's begin. You repeat what you said a minute ago and I'll copy it down.

(Concluded on Page 14)

"LET'S ALL MEET AT MY HOUSE"

by Audrey Harding.

Hello again ! The saga of the trials and tribulations of a Bing-collector's wife continues. As a record collector constantly concentrating on Bing, the maniac spends half his waking hours corresponding, meeting and chewing the rag with fellow maniacs. And he thinks nothing of throwing open-house to anyone man or beast (mostly beast !!) who expresses the slightest inclination to talk records. They all come the long hairs, the crew cuts, the accountants, the panel beaters, the dark glasses and berets and the purists and the Crosby-collectors.

A regular visitor is a draughtsman who plays double bass and doubles trumpet. He talks of flattened fifths, depressed ninths and academic harmony. Dizzy is his God and his nature. another parasite leaves his cigarette ends burning the polished table top while he rants about race series and argues whether Claxtonola evolved from Paramount or did Louis play on Blue Yodel No.9. And there's the character that can hear Bing on every strange elusive disc ranging from something cooked up by Trumbauer to a Silly Symphony record called Who Killed Cock Robin. I'm waiting for the day he can hear Bing on a Whiteman disc with vocal chorus by the massed glee clubs of Gonzaga.

Now that I can just about take. I can accept the inevitable hibernate with a brace of socks and darning wool and listen to "Take It From Here" in the kitchenette.

But what happens when any of my sane girl friends turn up. The moment she walks in the door the maniac grabs her arm, rushes her upstairs, forces her in an armchair, switches on the amplifier yelling the whole time such expressions as "This you must hear ... alternate masters ... this'll kill you ... different session six weeks apart ... terrific voicing ... the ol' Bing touch etc.

Ninety nine times out of a hundred he plays the blow-up. With volume full on "Wrap Your Troubles" roars through the open window and all the mothers in the Avenue stuff cotton wool in their children's ears and resignedly await the last chorus. "Well, didn't you get it?" leers our hero. "He called the orchestra dirty illegitimates (Except that maniac uses the recorded word fortissimo !!)

My friend who has lead a sheltered life until now, turns red and white alternatively and develops a hunted expression. Then follows Bing in every shape and form from Arnheim to Whiteman interlaced with other blow-ups, gin palace music and low down dirty blues ... and I mean dirty.

On one occasion the Vicar of Fulham paid us a visit. Having settled down with a cup of coffee he looked around the room, peered over his pince-nez, saw the racks and cabinets and asked the truly superfluous question "Are all those gramophone records dear boy?" I just managed to hiss out "For Heaven's sake please don't play the blow-up and the Vicar was let off comparatively lightly with "Empty Bed Blues", "Adeste Fidelis" and "Rook of Ages".

I tried to cover up my confusion with rapid double talk about knitting circles, mother's meetings and church bazaars. The wrong tack!! Jumble sales set maniac right off. I left him making a deal to have exclusive junking rights to any old records brought along to the Church Hall for jumble sales. Later he woke me up in the middle of the night

to ask if Vicars accepted bribe money.

Periodically, a rag and bone man will amble down our Avenue, knock on the door, thrust a bleary whiskery face around the window and rasp out "Gent oo lives ere arst me to drop in these ere gramophone records". He then dumps a filthy moth-eaten pile of old records in the front porch and enquires in a well seasoned voice if I have any ole rags ter git riddov.

I thank him politely and reach for my purse whereupon he breathes alcoholic fumes in my face and sez "S'owright, the gent'll see me later ... tell 'im ol' Charlie-boy called. Charlie-boy then attaches himself to his horse (?) and ambles off. The neighbours withdraw from the windows and a dozen curtains flutter back to normal.

On various occasions so called instrumentalists arrive in the early evening and stay until the early hours of the morning. To date we have had an embryo drummer, a double bass player who trots out the inevitable crack about putting it under his chin (I'll scream the next time he says it) a paper and comb merchant who kids himself he can imitate Red McKenzie and the usual egoists that like to believe they all sound like Bing especially when they sing in the bath. The collectors of Bing are the worst. I've had innumerable complaints from my neighbours who always ask if I have any consideration for my own children. I gave up long ago trying to convince them that my children love it - love every screeching note of it, love every warble and every trilling note.

And now maniac pinches my "Woman's Own" every week because there's a serialised life story of his God.

Anyone know of a four roomed flat with every mod con and H & C going cheap in the Stonehenge district.

CELLULOID CROSBY (continued from page 18.)

THE ROAD TO SINGAPORE

In 1939 Paramount hit upon the inevitable and the cheering was absolutely deafening as it always is when Hollywood discovers something that is as obvious as a fly in your eye. Combine Bing Crosby and Bob Hope in one film. The production powers congratulated themselves - the idea was nothing short of sensational - and of course they were right. The first of the Crosby-Hope "Road" pictures established a design for all their films together that was inevitably successful. As a couple of vaudevillians they travelled down the coast of Africa, ran through their vaudeville routines, hitched their waggon to Dottie Lamour's star and contemplated her figure from all angles. Plenty of room was left for innumerable gags, songs, jokes and semi-serious (?) dances by Bob, Bing and Dorothy. One running gag was started in "Road to Singapore" that was repeated in other Road pictures. When in dire trouble Bing and Bob would start to play Pat-a-cake fixing their most innocent and aimless expressions on their faces and ending with a few well placed blows in the face of their adversary. Bing was in his sartorial element in this picture, he spent nearly all the time in bedraggled trousers, a beat up old sailor's shirt and an old sloppy yachting cap. In one memorable scene, the trio ran through the engaging figures of sweet potato piper on ocarinas. The setting was a small African village filled with incredulous natives watching the crazy trio. Bing played the smallest ocarina, Dottie the largest and Bob the medium size and the scene gave them plenty of scope in the way of gags, grimaces and gestures. The other lilting tunes were "Too Romantic" and "The moon and the willow tree" and of course there was "Sweet Potato Pipe

Concluding Colin's series of articles for the record collector.

FILING SYSTEM.

My remarks in this article are addressed mainly to the young collector who is just starting to discover the pleasures and pitfalls inherent in this hobby, and can therefore safely be ignored by the more experienced collector, who has no doubt by this time evolved a filing system of his own; although I trust that even he will condescend to read this article with a view to either improving his own system or suggesting whereby mine may be improved.

"But why should I bother with a filing system?" The young collector will probably ask. "I only possess a few records so far and have no difficulty in finding them on my shelf and remembering what they are." I agree: when I first started collecting I thought as you do, but on looking back I can see how wrong I was and how much wiser it is to start an efficient system early on, rather than to wait until a much later date and try to evolve one with several hundred records.

What are the requirements of a first class filing system? i.e. what must it tell me? Briefly it must include all titles, matrix numbers, alternate masters, issue labels and my own file numbers. I have already described what is meant by matrix numbers and alternate masters in a previous article. Having decided upon the requirements for my system, I then asked myself "What am I collecting?" "Titles, labels or master numbers?" I decided that my aim was to get one copy of every different master on which Bing can be heard.

Having decided upon my requirements and what I was collecting, I was in a position to start. First I placed all my records in shelves in the order I required. In the main this consisted of batches containing the Whiteman, Arnheim, Lanin, Dorsey Brothers, etc. discs which have vocals by Bing, the English Columbia records, the English Brunswicks and all foreign labels, making four main batches in all.

Next I stuck a small rectangular label at the top right-hand corner of each record envelope as it lays on the table before you. As they stand on the shelves this label is at the top corner nearest to you and on the left-hand side of the envelope. In other words, since the records are round and the envelopes square, you may, without withdrawing any records, by running your right thumb across the top corners from left to right, catch sight of each label and read what is on it.

Now I proceeded to give each record a number of my own, which I called a file number, and which I printed as high in the corner as possible on the labels. It is immaterial what numbers you use, but it is advisable to have each batch of records together and to leave room for additional numbers as new discs are acquired.

After numbering, I printed the two titles of each disc neatly underneath each other on the label, keeping as far to the right-hand side as possible so as to leave a blank space on the left. At the end of each title in the blank space I inserted in brackets the file number of any other record which had a side of the same title, provided the master numbers were also the same.

Next, having stuck on and filled in all the labels, I obtained a cabinet of Record Card File Drawers from a shop selling office equipment, and also some packets of record cards size 5" x 3". Make sure, by the way, that the cards are ruled on both sides. These cards, when filled in, not only afford me a simple effective filing system but also a perfect history of each recording. All information cannot always be inserted immediately but may be added as collected. The following are examples of what can be recorded:- Title; File numbers; Catalogue numbers; Labels; Orchestra; Accompanying artists; Type of song (Hawaiian, Western, Ballad, etc.); Size (10" or 12"); Matrix numbers; Recording dates; Other remarks (Tempo, Duet, Chorus, Whistling, Talking, etc.).

Using a separate card for each master number and each alternative master, and working through my collection by taking one record at a time, I fill in the cards with the title at the top and all other information in the lines underneath. Before commencing a new card for a title I check through the completed cards in the drawer to ensure it is not a repetition. If I find I already have the title I then check the master number and if this is different another card is made out bearing the same title but with the different master number. In this manner sometimes several cards bear the same title but each represents a different recording.

It is also a good idea to use separate cards for alternate masters, and at some later date you may like to record the little differences in recordings between the masters; that is of course where you can tell any difference.

Once all the cards have been completed you will have a complete alphabetical index, and by turning up the title required it's file number will refer you straight to the record on the shelf besides supplying you with all the information concerning the recording in your possession.

If desired, another file could be kept of master numbers. These could be entered under their prefix letters 'DLA'; 'E'; 'L'; 'W'; etc. in numerical order. The only information necessary to record on these cards would be title and file number which will refer you to the main alphabetical file. In this way files can be kept analysing all the information you require.

There is just one other small set that it's advisable to keep for cross reference if you desire a complete list of titles. These are the tunes that Bing sings on various medleys: there are not many of them, so they can be easily listed. For instance "Medley of Gus Edwards' song hits" can be filed under 'G' as the title "Gus Edwards' medley." In a separate file the titles "Sunbennet Sue," "Jimmy Valentine" and "If I was a millionaire" can be listed with the same file number referring back to the main alphabetical file.

One further advantage of my system is that at any time you wish by simply counting the cards in your main file you can tell the exact number of different Bings that your library boasts. This is generally a hazy point with collectors and few could give you the exact number off hand.

That very briefly is how my filing system works; there may be flaws in it, but I have yet to discover them. If, due to the brevity of this article inflicted on me by the editors, there are any points that I've not made clear, or any queries arising out of my system in any way, please drop me a line and I'll be pleased to clear the matter up in a future issue of this journal. Any suggestions or improvements will also be most welcome.

INTRODUCING BING

Some time ago the editors requested members to send them articles telling the stories of how they became Bing fans; promising to print any that they considered of interest. One or two members have written to us, and we are accordingly printing their stories under the above title. We start this month with an article from Mrs Hazel Jean Knott of Southsea.

It is going back a bit into the old war years, 1943 to be exact. It is three weeks before Christmas. It is late evening. The scene is an A.T.S. cooks and orderlies barrack room of 'F' block in Aldershot.

Pte. Burr W/39974 (that's me) is sitting rather desolately in a far end bed in her kill-joy W.C. pyjamas. She has just been posted to this new camp. She has been out of the A.T.S. for three months nursing her mother who never recovered. She feels rather lonely and still an outsider amongst the other A.T.S.

..... I watch the cook-house orderlies come clumping off duty into the diab barrack room, their ungainly clogs clattering over the wooden floor. Their sack-like khaki-coloured overalls are wet from bending over huge sinks scouring hundreds of greasy pots and dishes. Their hands are red and coarsened. Wearily they make their way to their beds.

Some gather into groups as they undress. Snatches of conversation come my way "The corporal on duty is a creeper," the red caps are on the trail for pay book check ups" ... The company glamour girl relates to the barrack room details of her Orderly Room charge that took place that morning; seven days C.R. for kissing her Canadian good night behind the swill bins. "I'm putting in for a posting," she says, tossing her peroxidized yellow hair.

There is one A.T.S. who sits quietly cleaning her greatcoat buttons. She tries to hide her tears that mingle with the silve her husband had been posted over-seas three days ago and she had only been married two weeks.

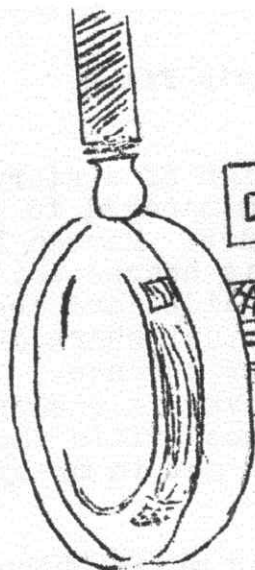
A brisk corporal bustles in: roll call is taken. "Lights out," she raps and, snapping off the electricity, vanishes. The barrack room is bathed in a warm cosy glow from the crackling old stove.

Suddenly a small head swathed in an army stocking bobs up over her bedclothes. "Bing's on!" she whispers tensely.

Like magic two small ghosts clad in W.D. pyjamas glide across the room. Their feet take wings ... their hideous clogs are cast away under their beds. One ghost mounts guard by the door while the other twiddles the wireless knobs. The radio is barred after lights out, but who cares.

Then suddenly, without warning, a voice as soft as silk fills the room. In warm compelling tones it sings of love...and home...and peace. As that magnetic voice rises and falls ... in the twilight I see those tired young faces relax. The girl, who had been cleaning her buttons, now sits up in bed, hugging her knees. A secret smile shines in her eyes as she gently caresses her wedding ring. A fat cook, her face gleaming in cold cream, her hair resplendent in pipe-cleaner curlers, gives a sigh of pure joy.

(Concluded on Page 19)



COLLECTOR'S

Page

by Reg. & Geoff.

This month, instead of the usual ramifications on alternate takes and master numbers, we had intended giving you a brief resume of the year's releases in this country, together with some information about those of the year's recordings which Decca have not yet released to us. However, having typed all the magazine with the exception of this page, we found that, after we had allowed room to conclude two other articles, we had approximately ten lines left available to us. Accordingly we are holding our article over until the next issue, and hope that all keen collectors will be compensated with Art's artistic heading at the top of this page.

TOO YOUNG TO DIE (Continued from Page 8)

Hope: Relax, boy. The whole thing's already down.

Sinatra: Already written?

Hope: Don't look now, son, but I've had my wire recorder turned on ever since you stepped into the living room. A voice like yours is still worth preserving.

Sinatra: Gee, thanks, Bob.

Hope: Think nothing of it, kid. So is mine, so is mine.

The End.

AIN'T DOIN' BAD (Continued from Page 3)

Milne, Ralph Harding and John Parker for all their support in producing this magazine, even though they have drunk all my beer in the process. Also Jean, Dot, Art, Les and Colin for their exemplary patience in dealing with me; it must be infuriating to write urgent letters to me and then receive no answer for several weeks.

And finally, on behalf of Geoff and myself, I should like to wish you all a very merry Christmas and, if, as is more likely, you don't receive this issue until after Christmas, a very happy New Year.

Reg.

Continuing Ralph Harding's series of articles on Bing's films

DOUBLE OR NOTHING

This was a real cinematic cream puff ... any sign of a story was sadly lacking and it's to Bing's credit that the film managed to get by. In many cinemas it filled in as the second feature. Martha Raye and her mouth were both back and Andy Devine added his hoarse voice and Benny Baker (not to be confused with the singer) aided and abetted and helped to keep the humour moving. Bing had his full share of the songs helped by Mary Carlisle who was in yet again for romance. Johnny Burke wrote the wonderful songs and Bing put over in unsurpassed style such hits as "Smart", "All you want to do is dance", "It's the natural thing to do" and that lovely number "The Moon got in my eyes"

DR. RHYTHM

Bing played the part of a singing policeman, this movie which was not regarded as an important Crosby film but it payed its way at the box office. Mary Carlisle came in for the love and kisses and yet again Andy Devine carried the comic angle with Beatrice Lillie (why don't we see more of her in films!) Louis Armstrong, his trumpet and his Orchestra provided the musical highlights. Johnny Burke and Jimmy Monaco wrote the tunes "My heart is taking lessons", "This is my night to dream", "On the sentimental side" and they were ably delivered by Bing.

SING YOU SINNERS

The advent of a new Crosby. No longer necessary to pad out his movies with zany patchwork romances and slapstick comedy, this was the film in which Bing really found himself.... a lazy, undependable, happy-go-lucky good-hearted guy who was crazy about horses and whose main aim in life was to swap things. There was no love angle or even a real love scene for him. His brother (played by Fred MacMurray) got the gal and as far as Crosby was concerned, so much the better. Bing played the middle of three brothers, the eldest was Fred (who also played hot clarinet in the trio) and the youngest was Donald O'Connor. Donald who played brother, accordion, jockey and singer made his Hollywood debut ... this was his first film. From the opening scene where the trio lustily sing hymns at Sunday service with their mother proudly looking on to the final fade-out it was a film packed with everything, good tunes, a good story, sentiment and loads of good humour. The piece de resistance was that delightful scene written especially for the picture by Frank Loesser and Hoagy Carmichael hereby dedicated to all small fry. (my own included)

The scene was set by a backdrop depicting a ramshackle old cabin. Fred decked out in blackface, grey wig, false bosom, long dress and apron, smoking a corn-cob with Bing filled out in a Prince Albert coat, blackface, white rimmed glasses, snowy beard and stovepipe hat, a pint of wallop clutched in his hand and Donald in rags, a kids beaten-up old trilby ... all went through the intricacies and problems of Tall Fry dealing with Small Fry. Other tunes were "Laugh and call it love", "I've got a pocketful of dreams", "Don't let that moon get away" and "A Blues serenade". A critic summed up Bing's acting at that time "He borrows something from the deadpan school of slapstick comic and something from the insouciant ogle of the professional master to produce an effect of being congenitally at home and sure of himself anywhere!"

PARTIS HONEY MOON

Bing played the part of a rich Westerner who ended up in remote European-Baltic country with a lovely little gal played by Franciska Gaal who made her first and last American Movie appearance in this film. More's the pity. Akim Tamaroff added authentic accent to the story and Shirley Ross came in for some singing and to play the part of the girl that Bing was engaged to but just didn't marry. Our little Franciska was the lucky girl after being constantly rebuffed. Bing sang "You're a sweet little head-ache" to her while sheltering in a cave from a storm and he also sang "I have eyes" "Jacobalai" and right at the very beginning of the film "The funny old hills" complete with nostalgia at having to leave his western life. Not easily remembered is the hilarious scene where, acting the part of a ghost to scare Franciska out of the castle Bing pokes his head through a hole in a dinner trolley covered in a cloth (so that his head appears to be resting on a platter a la John the Baptist) and sings "I ain't got nobody !" Edward Everett Horton as his faithful, conscientious and fluttery valet and adviser and Ben Blue both came in for some very funny lines.

EAST SIDE OF HEAVEN

This tenement symphony presented New York's East side which, as all good students of Americana know, is the East End slum area of America's largest city. But in this saga, the streets looked remarkably clean and tidy and not one solitary dustbin stood by the pavement. Bing gets landed with a baby boy in the nappy stage and spends most of his time driving a taxi and crooning to the afore mentioned infant. The lyrics were just this side of out-and-out corn and only Bing's excellent singing gave them any substance. At the risk of being slugged by an irate fan, I would say that this film was one of the weakest that Bing has ever made. It did little to boost him to stardom (not that he needed much boosting at this stage of his career)

An amusing and perfectly true feature was that the baby boy in the film turned out to be a baby girl in real life much to the consternation of poppa Bing and director David Butler. "East side of Heaven", "Hang your heart on a hickory limb", Sing a song of sunbeams" and lastly "That sly old gentleman from featherbed lane" were the songs and with the exception of "Sunbeams" that Bing warbled as he drove his taxi, I think they are best forgotten.

THE STARMAKER

This film was a dead sure smash hit from the start. In an unbeatable combination of show-business lore and child actors, Bing played a part fashioned after the career of Gus Edwards who had brought people like Eddie Cantor, Georgie Price, Walter Winchell, Lila Lee, George Jessel to name just a few into prominence through the medium of his child-revues. Bing strolled through a delightful film in check suits, polka-dot bow ties and brown derby hats. Apart from the wonderful tunes there was some classical and semi-classical music purveyed by a young singer Linda Ware and the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra directed by Walter Damrosch. Ned Sparks of the dead pan constantly chewing his unlit Churchillian cigar provided the sarcastic humour and Laura Hope Crews helped to balance the lush music and sentiment with her humorous ironies. Louise Campbell was the love interest who always and always believed that Bing could be and would be a successful producer. And so he was ... so there !" The tunes were classified in the terrific section. "An apple for the teacher", "A Man and his dream", "In my merry Oldsmobile", Go fly a kite" "Still the bluebird sings and a medley of some of the hits that Gus made famous.

The GROANER IN THE GROOVE

LESLIE GAYLOR
SERVES YOUR

Christmas Groceries!

Once again the Christmas season is with us, so I would like to offer my sincere best wishes for a merry Christmas and a happy New Year to all club members and officers and not forgetting Bing himself.

Since our last journal, when I gave you my views on that magnificent batch of seventeen discs, I am pleased to say that we have been blessed with a few more recordings from Decca. I think I can speak for all of you when I say that I hope that Deccas will make 1952 as prosperous a year for the issue of Bing's recordings as they have 1951.

Now for the recent releases.

When you and I were young Maggie blues.
The yodellin' ghost.

L6182	27/3/51	**
L6031	1/2/51	*****

"Maggie" features Bing duetting with his son Gary. I was not impressed with the tune which seemed to me to be largely lacking. Gary dominates most of the record while Bing has been pushed into the background. However we do hear a nice little bit of Bing's genius at the beginning of the side, and he occasionally inserts some of his famous ad lib remarks. Nevertheless Bing and Gary seem to be very happy about the whole recording and they are well backed up by Matty Matlock and his All Stars.

"Yodellin' ghost" is a much better side, I think. Here we find Bing teamed up with the Andrews Sisters and an echo chamber, which has been used to good effect. Bing indulges in a bit of yodelling making great use of the echo chamber. The Andrews Sisters are in great form with their accompaniment supplied by Vic Schen. A very pleasing side for all Bing-Andrews Sisters fans.

Some enchanted evening.
Bali Ha'i.

L4922	10/3/49	*****
L4921	10/3/49	**

These two sides are from the Hammerstein-Rodgers musical play "South Pacific" which enjoyed great popularity on Broadway and is now running at the Drury Lane Theatre in London.

"Some enchanted evening" is simply superb, especially in the first half; his famous style of crooning is terrific. Listen to the way his beautiful bass tones are well brought out and how brilliantly the strings of John Scott Trotter's orchestra follow Bing up. This is really a first class Bing recording that should suit everyone's taste. It is also the best version of this lovely song that has been made.

I find I like Bali Ha'i more after each playing, although it isn't in the same class as Some enchanted evening. However we do hear Bing singing a nice tuneful refrain in parts of this disc.

Quizas, quizas, quizas.
Here ends the rainbow.

L6041
L6057

5/2/51
9/2/51

"Quizas" is the first of four recordings Bing has made with the Bando da Lua to be issued here. It is a really good side and the musical accompaniment is simple but very enchanting. Bing is in magnificent form, in fact he couldn't be better. Some of you will doubtless know this song better under it's English title of "Perhaps, perhaps, perhaps," it's a South American type of number with appropriate accompaniment. The recording is well done which in turn brings Bing out at his best: how saucy he sounds at the finish when he pops in with the words "Could be!"

The reverse is I hear the most popular Bing disc with Radio Luxembourg's three main announcers. I admit it's good, but nothing to rave about; probable because I'm not too struck with the squeaky voice of Betty Mullin who duets with Bing. However Bing does some pleasant crooning in places and there is a nice accompaniment by Lyn Murray in Hawaiian style.

Misto Cristo Columbo.

L6319

20/6/51

In the cool; cool, cool of the evening.

L6318

20/6/51

Bonne nuit.

L6320

20/6/51

You're own little house.

L6321

20/6/51

These four titles are from Bing's latest film "Here comes the groom" and thank goodness they are presented better on records than they were on the film sound track.

"Columbo" deals with the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus and ends up by praising America's "Freedom" shore in typical patriotic vein.

"Cool of the evening" is reckoned to be the hit song of the film, but I can't see why.

Both these sides go with a great deal of swing with excellent Bing in places. He is accompanied by the actress Jane Wyman who does pretty well as a singer. Matty Matlock's All Stars provide the noisy musical accompaniment.

Incidentally, for those of you who already possess this disc, would I be correct if I said that Johnny Mercer pops in at the start of "Cool of the evening" to sing "Save your pappy a chair!" It sounds very like him and I notice Bing laughs at this point. It is very probable that he was in the studio at the time as he composed the song. If it's not him, then Bing does a grand piece of imitating.

"Bonne nuit" is beautifully crooned; it was to my mind the only time we really heard Bing in the film, when he sang this song while putting the children to bed.

But of the four titles from the film I give best marks to "Your own little house" which I consider a splendid piece of Crosbyana. The lyrics are simple but well written and words cannot be found to praise John Scott Trotter's splendid orchestral accompaniment; those strings are simply magnificent.

Black ball ferry line.
Shanghai.

L6030
L6308

1/2/51
8/6/51

These are two good sides. Bing is again accompanied by the Andrews Sisters on the first title which is all about an American shipping line or so I imagine, but I am open to correction on that point. The recording swings along nicely with the usual Vic Schoen accompaniment.

"Shanghai" has become a very popular number and Bing's version is the best I've heard. It is the first recording to be issued here where Bing is accompanied by Dave Barbour and his orchestra and the music is nice and solid. The only thing spoiling the record I think was the singing at the end of the side which could have been done much better.

Gone fishing.	L6262	27/4/51	*****
Moonlight bay.	L6181	22/3/51	****

"Gone fishing" is quite one of the best Bing's to be issued here for some time. Bing is accompanied by the famous trumpet player Louis Armstrong in one of those talking and singing duets in the style of the famous early Bing and Johnny Mercer sides "Mr. Crosby and Mr. Mercer", "Small fry", etc. I particularly liked the way in which John Scott's saxophone section supported Bing and Louis in the first half of the record.

Bing opens with a magnificent solo and then there is some amusing backchat between Mr. Satch and Mr. Cros with mention of Bing's sons. Altogether a superb recording: let's have some more like it please Bing.

"Moonlight bay" is the original coupling of "When you and I were young Maggie blues" and is a much more enjoyable side. We hear a fair amount of Bing this time and Gary seems to be in good shape. I rank this side in merit with Sam's song, both are far superior than "Play a simple melody" and "Maggie."

-X-

INTRODUCING BING. (Continued from Page 13)

For a brief sweet while, life, with it's problems, it's dull routine and it's sudden moments of great danger, is forgotten.

Gently the song comes to an end. The radio clicks and two ghosts glide back to bed while the barrack room settles down for the night.

The firelight glints on fire bucket and tin helmet gently, almost tenderly, it falls on the sleeping faces of the girls. Is it possible? I seem to see a smile of peace and happiness hovering on their lips. And why not? Did not that voice on the radio sing of love....and peace? Those carefree festive Christmases would come back; and one day the siren's wail would change to a joyous hymn of church bells ringing.

..... And who was this singer with a prayer in his voice? Only a guy that calls himself Bing Crosby - I later discovered.

My little story ends. I have tried to tell it as faithfully as possible: how Bing conquered me with one song in a dingy barrack room and why? Because behing the warm and friendly voice I felt there was an equally warm and kindly heart which said, "However dark the clouds may be - there is always a silver lining."